

VZCZCXRO8429
PP RUEHDBU RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHNP RUEHROV RUEHSL RUEHSR
DE RUEHFR #1155 2331610
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 211610Z AUG 09
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7016
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 001155

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/PI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/21/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [FR](#)

SUBJECT: BMENA: FRANCE UNDECIDED ON LEVEL OF PARTICATION

REF: STATE 82753

Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor Kathleen H. Allegrone, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Poloffs delivered reftel demarche August 18 to MFA North Africa DAS Cyrille Rogeau, Special Assistant to the MFA Middle East Director Michel Roche, and MFA Morocco Desk Officer Marie Buscail. Rogeau said the MFA strongly supports the aims and ideals of the November BMENA Forum for the Future, but he and his two colleagues explained that the MFA is currently in a "reflection phase" about the level of French participation in the event, prior to formulating recommendations for presentation to FM Kouchner in early September.

¶2. (C) The likelihood of Kouchner's participation will increase significantly if Secretary Clinton commits to attending, they explained, implying that Kouchner will not attend without the Secretary. Moreover, they asked specifically if the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will be invoked at the conference, either in the official agenda or on the sidelines. They hinted that the prospect of serious discussion in Marrakech about the peace process would significantly increase the chances of Kouchner's attendance. (NOTE: They are aware that the Government of Israel will not be participating in the Forum for the Future. END NOTE.)

¶3. (C) Until the MFA has submitted its recommendations and learned Kouchner's reaction, Rogeau said, the French cannot commit to participating in any of the scheduled September workshops or in the October preparatory meeting in Rome. All three interlocutors repeatedly stressed that the USG can have a positive influence on the level and intensity of GOF participation by providing more information about our own plans. They stated that more information from the USG would help to strengthen the case they will likely make to Kouchner, encouraging him to participate. Specifically, they asked for responses to three questions:

-- Will the Secretary attend?

-- Does President Obama intend to mention BMENA specifically, or the aims of the Marrakech Forum for the Future more generally, at his speech to the UN General Assembly in September?

-- Do we have more precise information about the content of the programs and projects the Forum for the Future intends to produce, and how France might constructively contribute?

Post would appreciate any further information available on these questions.

RIVKIN